



RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT  
U.S. Appln. No. 10/752,674

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-14. (Cancelled).

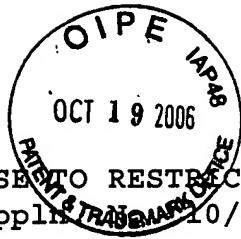
Claim 15. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising equol which is obtained by causing a strain of a live microorganism capable of metabolizing daidzein to equol to act upon a daidzein-containing substance, wherein said strain is selected from the group consisting of *Bacteroides* E-23-15, which has been deposited as FERM BP-6435, *Streptococcus* E-23-17, which has been deposited as FERM BP-6436, and *Streptococcus* A6G-225, which has been deposited as FERM BP-6437.

Claims 16-17. (Cancelled).

Claim 18. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 15, which further contains at least one component that favors the maintenance and growth of the strain.

Claim 19. (Currently Amended) The composition according to Claim ~~15~~18, wherein the component that favors the maintenance and growth of the strain is at least one substance selected from the group consisting of galactosylsucrose, soybean-oligosaccharide, lactulose, lactitol and fructo-oligosaccharide.

Claim 20. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 15, wherein said daidzein-containing substance further contains at least one member selected from the group consisting of genistein, daidzin and genistin.



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Claim 21. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 15, wherein the daidzein-containing substance is soya isoflavone.

Claim 22. (Cancelled).

Claim 23. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 15, wherein said composition is a food composition.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 23, wherein the food composition is selected from the group consisting of a drink, dairy product, and fermented milk.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 15, which is in a pharmaceutical dosage form.

Claim 26. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 25, wherein the pharmaceutical dosage form is selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions, emulsions, granules, powders, capsules and tablets.

Claims 27-32. (Cancelled).

Claim 33. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 15.

Claim 34. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 18.

Claim 35. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 19.

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Claim 36. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 20.

Claim 37. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 21.

Claim 38. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 23.

Claim 39. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 24.

Claim 40. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 25.

Claim 41. (Previously presented) A method for treating menopausal syndrome in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 26.

Claim 42. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 15.

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Claim 43. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 18.

Claim 44. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 19.

Claim 45. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 20.

Claim 46. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 21.

Claim 47. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 23.

Claim 48. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 24.

Claim 49. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 25.

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Claim 50. (Previously presented) A method for treating postmenopausal osteoporosis in a middle-aged to elderly woman comprising administering to a middle-aged to elderly woman in need thereof, the composition of Claim 26.

Claim 51. (New) A method for producing the composition of Claim 15, comprising causing a strain of a live microorganism capable of metabolizing daidzein to equol to act upon a daidzein-containing substance, wherein said strain is selected from the group consisting of *Bacteroides* E-23-15, which has been deposited as FERM BP-6435, *Streptococcus* E-23-17, which has been deposited as FERM BP-6436, and *Streptococcus* A6G-225, which has been deposited as FERM BP-6437.

Claim 52. (New) The method according to Claim 51, wherein the composition further contains at least one component that favors the maintenance and growth of the strain.

Claim 53. (New) The method according to Claim 52, wherein the component that favors the maintenance and growth of the strain is at least one substance selected from the group consisting of galactosylsucrose, soybean-oligosaccharide, lactulose, lactitol and fructo-oligosaccharide.

Claim 54. (New) The method according to Claim 51, wherein said daidzein-containing substance further contains at least one member selected from the group consisting of genistein, daidzin and genistin.

Claim 55. (New) The method according to Claim 51, wherein the daidzein-containing substance is soya isoflavone.

Claim 56. (New) The method according to Claim 51, wherein said composition is a food composition.

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Claim 57. (New) The method according to Claim 56, wherein the food composition is selected from the group consisting of a drink, dairy product, and fermented milk.

Claim 58. (New) The method according to Claim 51, wherein the composition is in a pharmaceutical dosage form.

Claim 59. (New) The method according to Claim 58, wherein the pharmaceutical dosage form is selected from the group consisting of aqueous solutions, emulsions, granules, powders, capsules and tablets.